

## **Follow Me** **Matthew 16:21-28**

*From that time:* Jesus had acknowledged that he was the Christ, promised to build his church, and give the apostles authority in his kingdom. He said he would do this, and the “*gates of hades*” would not prevent it. Did they understand him? He had made allusions to his death before, but now he tells them plainly. In the parallel account of Mark it says, “*He spake that saying openly.*”

*Began Jesus to show...* Notice the detail.

1. Where this would take place? Jerusalem
2. What would happen there? Suffer many things
3. Who would do this? Elders, chief priests, and scribes
4. How would he die? He would be killed
5. What would follow his death? The resurrection
6. When would he be raised? The third day

Let us not lose sight of the purpose for which Matthew is telling this. He is giving us reasons to believe. Here Jesus knew details about a future event, and all things took place even as he said. Is this not the Christ?

Notice also that he did not just go, he said he *must* go. He could not build his church and establish his kingdom unless he did go. The cross was fundamental to his mission.

This would have been difficult for the apostles to hear; indeed, it appears that even though he told them plainly, they could not grasp it. All their lives they had anticipated an earthly political Messiah, and Jesus was the Messiah, but how could he be their Messiah if he was to be killed. To this day this is one of the reasons Muslims give for rejecting Christ as God. They cannot grasp how God could be killed. And to this day there are many that still cannot grasp a spiritual kingdom, and they are expecting Jesus to come back again and establish a worldly political kingdom where he will have an earthly reign. These apostles are like us, sometimes, after we learn a thing wrong it is hard to see it right regardless of how clear it is explained. No doubt, this must have been what was troubling Peter.

*Took him and rebuked him...* WHAT? Look at the word “*rebuke.*” Had he not just confessed that Jesus was the Christ the son of God, and now he was going to correct him? That is hard to believe, but again, we see this today. People who believe Jesus is the Christ, and sincerely believe they believe, and yet think they know better than he does. Think they can “do church” better, think they know more about human relationships, they have a better plan of salvation, they think they have better ways to worship... WHAT? Is he not the Christ? How could you know better?

Jesus rebuked him back, and called him Satan. That ought to be enough to clear the air about Jesus building his church Peter. He was a little, rough, hard rock Jesus told us the kind of rock Peter was – a stumbling stone – not a stable bedrock suitable for a foundation. “*Satan?*” Jesus saw something Peter himself did not see. Jesus was Satan working through Peter. Must have

reminded him of those temptations in the wilderness, stones into bread, the pinnacle of the temple so all would come to him, all the earthly kingdoms of the world – get the hence Satan... “you get away from me.” It was a temptation, because going to the cross what he must do because he was the son of God, as the son of man is was not something he wanted to do. Peter was not helping him. With all good intentions he was being used as a tool of Satan, we must not be ignorant of Satan’s devices, **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**. *Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.* Peter was out of place, in front of Jesus trying to lead when he should be behind trying to follow. Besides his impertinence he had another problem, looking at things from a worldly view rather than as a spiritual view.

**Colossians 3:1-2**. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

*Self-denial*, not denying things for yourself, hungry, poor, denial of self itself, ask the world and they will tell you; you have to look out for number one, but they are talking about yourself, our number one should be Christ.

*Take up cross*, again, not bearing the natural infirmities and troubles of this world, we all have problems we have to live with, those things voluntarily suffered because of our decision to be a follower of Jesus.

*Follow me* – though it means suffering and death, follow me – again remember that word “*must*” Jesus was going to do what was right, like it or not, it is always right... He did not say, “*I just want you to be happy.*” He said take up your cross and follow me.

**Vs.25** Physical life and spiritual life. So, the next verse the life is spiritual life, translated “soul.”

**Vs. 26-27:** Old County Song:

*Brother afar from the savior today  
Risking your soul for the things that decay  
O if today God should call you away  
What will you give in exchange for your soul?*

**Vs.28.** Coming in his kingdom. He had been talking about his coming kingdom, keys of the kingdom. Happen during their lifetime. Not a future earthly one, his church, established on Pentecost, and fulfillment of God’s reign in the heavens on this earth. So, first there is a coming in his kingdom, and later there will be a coming in the glory of the Father with the angels.